

Gold Humanism Honor Society Membership Indicator to Be Added to ERAS Applications Beginning With 2016 Application Cycle

The Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) Electronic Residency Application Service (ERAS) Advisory Committee recently announced that membership in the Gold Humanism Honor Society (GHHS) will now be included on the MyERAS application and the Program Director's Workstation as a filterable field, beginning with the 2016 ERAS application cycle.

GHHS is a signature program of The Arnold P. Gold Foundation. The Gold Foundation is nationally recognized for promoting compassionate, patient-centered care. In 2002, the Foundation launched GHHS to identify students, residents, and faculty who embody the qualities of integrity, excellence, altruism, respect, and empathy, and would serve as role models, leaders, and advocates for humanism in medicine. Since its inception, GHHS has grown steadily, and as of November 2014, has 117 medical student chapters, 15 resident chapters, and more than 20 000 members.

Membership selection within individual GHHS chapters occurs through a rigorous vetting process. Students, residents, and fellows are nominated through a peer survey that selects for the personal attributes of clinical competence, caring, and service.¹ Once selected, new members are inducted in a formal ceremony, recognized as exemplars by their community, and tasked with serving as role models, mentors, and advocates for compassionate, patient-based care.

Program directors have stated that membership in GHHS is an important determining factor in the resident selection process. Comparison of data from the 2012 and 2014 Program Director Survey published by the National Resident Matching Program^{2,3} shows the increasing influence of GHHS membership on decisions to interview and rank applicants.

The GHHS indicator in ERAS will allow easy identification of GHHS member applicants and will assist program directors in a number of ways. GHHS member-

ship is an important component of a holistic review process that goes beyond evaluation of an applicant based primarily on grades and examination scores. Researchers have shown an association between personality traits and GHHS status that is predictive of positive clinical evaluations during medical school. In addition, studies have shown that personality characteristics are positive predictors of performance in residency training.⁴ GHHS member students have also reported interest in entering a primary care specialty in greater numbers compared to their non-GHHS peers.⁵ This information may positively inform program directors in medical specialties in which recruitment of applicants interested in primary care is critical.

We are grateful to the AAMC ERAS Advisory Committee for recognizing the value of GHHS membership, and making it a sortable indicator on the ERAS application beginning in spring 2015.

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For any questions about GHHS membership or what it signifies regarding your applicants, contact Lynn White, MD, Director, GHHS, at 201.569.7999, ext. 190 or lwhite@gold-foundation.org.

References

- 1 McCormack WT, Lazarus C, Stern D, Small PA Jr. Peer nomination: a tool for identifying medical student exemplars in clinical competence and caring, evaluated at three medical schools. *Acad Med.* 2007;82(11):1033–1039.
- 2 National Resident Matching Program; Data Release and Research Committee. *Results of the 2012 NRMP Program Director Survey.* Washington, DC: National Resident Matching Program; 2012.
- 3 National Resident Matching Program; Data Release and Research Committee. *Results of the 2014 NRMP Program Director Survey.* Washington, DC: National Resident Matching Program; 2014.
- 4 Haight SJ, Chibnall JT, Schindler DL, Slavin SJ. Associations of medical student personality and health/wellness characteristics with their medical school performance across the curriculum. *Acad Med.* 2012;87(4):476–485.
- 5 Specter S, Kahn M, Lazarus C, Wong J, O'Donnell J, McCormack W, et al. Relationship between Gold Humanism Honor Society (GHHS) membership and selection of a primary care residency: a multi-institutional study. Manuscript in preparation.